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FM AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5819
INFO RUEHHI/AMEMBASSY HANOI PRIORITY 3810
RUEHHM/AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY PRIORITY 6055
RUCNARF/ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM COLLECTIVE
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA PRIORITY 0008
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HO CHI MINH CITY 000433

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MLS, USAID/ANE, EEB/TPP/BTA/ANA
USDOC FOR 4431/MAC/AP/OPB/VLC/HPPHO
CDC FOR COGH (SBLOUNT), CCID (SREDD) AND DIV-FLU (NCOX/AMOHEN)
HHS/OSSI/DSI PASS TO FIC/NIH (RGLASS) AND OGHA (DMILLER/MABDOO)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [AMED](#) [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [PINR](#) [KFLU](#) [VM](#)

SUBJECT: TFLU01: FIRST THREE CASES OF NOVEL INFLUENZA A/H1N1
IDENTIFIED IN VIETNAM, ONE CONFIRMED

REF: (A) HCMC 415, (B) HCMC 429

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11. (SBU) SUMMARY. The Vietnamese Ministry of Health's Administration of Preventive Medicine confirmed Vietnam's first case of novel influenza AH1N1 on May 31 (a Vietnamese student from Wisconsin). The next day brought reports of two unconfirmed additional cases (a mother and daughter from Los Angeles). Press reports say all three cases arrived in Vietnam from the United States, via connecting flights. The GVN is aggressively following up with fellow passengers and those in contact with the confirmed cases, in one case requesting Mission assistance to contact one American Citizen who had been on the same flight. Mission Vietnam's Emergency Action Committee met on June 1, and noting there has not been confirmed sustained community transmission in Vietnam, decided to update Mission's A/H1N1 warden message and welcome cables, and to continue closely monitoring developments. END SUMMARY.

First Cases of A/H1N1 in Vietnam

12. (SBU) MoH officials contacted Mission on May 31 to share that Vietnam's initial confirmed novel influenza A/H1N1 patient was a Vietnamese student returning from Chicago via Hong Kong aboard United 869 on May 26 (along with 189 persons, reportedly including 106 American citizens). The patient first went to his neighborhood hospital with complaints of fatigue and was referred to the Hospital for Tropical Diseases HCMC (HTD) (reftels), where he tested positive (by PCR) for A/H1N1 on May 129. The National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology (NIHE) in Hanoi confirmed his positive status on May 31, using U.S. CDC diagnostics kits supplied through WHO auspices. On June 1, the HTD identified two additional positive cases--local press reports say they are American Citizens arriving from Los Angeles, though we have yet to establish this--and sent samples to NIHE for official confirmation. (Comment: In Vietnam, only the NIHE in Hanoi currently has the authority, and the capacity, to confirm A/H1N1 using U.S. CDC diagnostic kits. End comment.) Press reports say that all three arrived by plane in Vietnam from the United States on April 26, the first via Hong Kong (confirmed by MOH) and the second and third from via Korea (unconfirmed).

13. (SBU) MoH officials told Mission that they are talking with anyone who had been in close contact with these patients, advising them all to remain under voluntary quarantine at home or in their hotel room for a period of seven days after last possible exposure on 26 May (i.e., until 2 June). Passengers

have been advised that if they develop fever, cough, or sore throat they should report to hospital authorities. If determined to be suspect cases they will be isolated in hospital and have specimens taken for testing. Oseltamivir (Tamiflu) is being recommended only for confirmed cases and their household members or other close contacts. This is no easy task, according to Dr. Giang they're seeking 125 passengers in HCMC and an 74 others in 24 provinces.

MOH Translates Planning into Action

14. (SBU) Later on May 31, Mission got a first-hand look at how the GVN is following up with passengers when HCMC Department of Health Spokesman Dr. Phan Van Nghiem contacted the Consulate to confirm the case in HCMC and ask for USG assistance in locating a possible contact, an American Citizen who had been on the May 26 flight. Dr. Nghiem said MOH is tracking individuals who came in contact with the positive case. One passenger on United 869 had listed a Consulate officer (currently out of the country on R and R leave) as his point of contact. Police visited the officer's address twice (trying to confirm nobody was there) and public health officials contacted the Consulate repeatedly until we determined the location of the person. Dr. Nghiem promised to provide additional information to Mission as it becomes available.

Emergency Action Committee Convenes

15. (SBU) Mission Vietnam's Emergency Action Committee (EAC) convened on June 1 to review developments, noting that there has not been confirmed sustained community transmission in Vietnam. Therefore, the EAC decided to update Mission's Consular Affairs Bureau-cleared influenza A/H1N1 warden message, add language to Mission welcome cables and to continue closely monitoring developments.

16. (U) This cable is a joint product of Embassy Hanoi and

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Consulate Ho Chi Minh City.
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